[P. 282]

'N-DĪUN OO-'L-MAASAE
MASAI CUSTOMS

301 Seghenge oo-'murto oo 'surutya oo-'ñgorōyok, oo 'n-gulye-tōkitin.

Women's iron necklaces and ear-rings, and other matters.

Nēji pe eata 'ñgorōyok i-seghenge oo-'murto oo 'surutya
[585] [554] ēji p' eiyōlōuni 'njere 'ñgorōyok kunda.

The reason why women wear necklaces of iron and ear-rings (called 'surutya) is in order that it shall be known that they are married.

[881] Amu itadua, 'l-Maasae emurat in-doiye etaa bōtoro, nēji p'ēori en-ditoo e-ñgorōyōni.

The Masai circumcise girls when they grow up, and these ornaments are worn to make a distinction between girls and women.

Amu ten epali 'ñgorōyok meata 'seghenge oo-'murto araki 'surutya, nemeiyōlōuni e-ñgorōyōni o en-dito.

For if the women were left without the iron necklaces or the ear-rings, it could not be ascertained whether they were women or girls.

881 561 Itadua, en-dito namurati too-'l-Maasae mōji en-dito ēji e-ñgorōyōni: kake ēji e-siangiki oo metōlsho.

A Masai girl who has been circumcised is not called girl but woman. That is to say, she is called young woman until she gives birth to a child.

Even if she is very young, she is considered to be grown up as soon as she has been circumcised.

A woman is recognizable by three things, the ear-rings, the iron-necklace, and the big garment, none of which girls possess.

Ten a kiti naleñg, naa e-ñgorōyōni ake etiu nēja.

301 554 Eiyōlōuni e-ñgorōyōni too-'n-dōkitin uni, 'surutya, oo 'seghenge oo-'murto, oo 'l-okesena. Nemeata 'n-doiye kunna pōkin.

'Musetani epika 'n-doiye oo 'n-gutiti-seghenge nairina, naaji 'seengani, o ol-gilishōni, oo 'n-gulye-kutiti-tōkitin naapik i-murto, 'l-pisya loo-'n-giyaa, oo 'seghenge oo-'ng-aik, oo 'n-oo-'n-gejek.

Girls wear beads, small pieces of iron wire (called 'seengani), and other trifles round their necks, and a small cloth. They also have chains in their ears, and armlets and anklets of iron.

1: Hollis G-5 (ca. 1894-1904) 1905
FL12 Masai FL12

[585]

[Facing P. 283]

1. Married woman's ear with e-surutyai ear-ring and ear ornaments [⅓].
2. Stone ear-ring weighing 2 lb. 14 oz.; used for extending the lobe of the ear [⅓].

1: Hollis G-5 (ca. 1894-1904) 1905
FL12 Masai FL12

Neishop ol-kila ōbo o e-musetai nabo te-'m-bolos anaa 'l-muran.

They wear one garment and a belt round their waists similar to the warriors. 291 554

Nemepik ninje 'ñgorōyok tōki 'm-bolosi enye, 'n-gitatin ake naañye 'l-kilani lenye too-'m-bolosi.

Women wear nothing round their waists except a broad belt with which they fasten their garments.

Neishop i-ñgorōyok il-kilani aare, ōbo ōji ol-okesena o likae ōji ol-lekishopo.

They also wear two cloths, one called ol-okesena, and the other ol-lekishopo.

Ore aii 'surutya, naa endōki kitok too-'l-Maasae, amu meitēu 'ñgorōyok aatuñgai 'surutya enye pesho ake ten eishu ol-móruo lenye.

Now with regard to the women's ear-rings, they are of great consequence amongst the Masai, for no woman ventures to leave them off during her husband's lifetime. 301 585 554

Naa, ten eitau e-ñgorōyōni 'surutya aigh eitobirita en-giaa, ore pe eniñgu ol-móruo lenye, nekwet aji alo apika 'surutya enyena, pe medol ol-móruo meata.

Were a woman to take off her ear-rings and hang them up while doing her work, she would run into her hut on hearing her husband approach, and put them on again, so that he should not see her without them.

Ore ten elo ol-móruo 'n-gwapi, nemeitēu e-ñgorōyōni enye aitau 'surutya, amu ten edol kulikae-móruak meata, nējo eiba ol-móruo lenye.

If a man goes away from home, his wife does not dare to take off her ear-rings, for were the other men to see her without them, they would tell her that her husband will hate her.

'Surutya o ol-masangus loo-'l-móruak oo 'n-gulye-tōkitin.

The ear-rings and arm-rings of old men, and other matters. 301 554

'L-ayok oo 'n-doiye oopika 'n-gulalen. Epika 'l-muran oo 'l-móruak il-giso 'n-giyaa, neata

Boys and girls put blocks of wood into their ears, called 'n-gulalen[1], and warriors and old-men wear chain ear-

[1] These blocks are gradually increased in size as the lobe stretches. The proper length is attained if the lobes meet at the top of the head. Perhaps the largest Masai ear-ring in existence is one of stone weighing 2 lb. 14 oz., which the author recently presented to the British Museum. [304]

1: Hollis G-5 (ca 1894-1904) 1905
FL12 Masai FL12

Neeli 'l-kilani le-'ñgorōyōn, neishop, neishori em-bukui naripakīno 'seghera 'matwai pōkin. Neitanapi eng-orioñi, neriki eng-añg o-'l-móruo lenye, nerubare ol-móruo, oo 'l-tuñganak aare 'l-choruet lenyeng, oo 'n-gituak ar e-'ng-añg e-'ñgorōyōni.

Nemesiōyo, erikitoi elo akit oo metabai. Ore pe ebaiki neishori en-gerai, neitōti.

Ten eiyam ol-móruo e ñgorōyōni, nemeipot eng-arn enye, amu torono. Eduñgōk ae-arna. Enyor naleñg aipoty eng-arna o-'l-poror lenye, ana 'N-oo-'Sēure.

Ten eata ol-tuñgani oo-'l Maasae 'n-gīshu kumok, neidin aiyama 'ñgorōyok kumok Etii kulikae ooiyam 'ñgorōyol are, ana uni, ana oñgwan kake eiyam il-karsisi, ter eiyōu, tomon ana tigitām.

Ten eiyam ol-Maasani kat'- are āraki kat'-uni, neisho en-gitok enye eng-aīni ol-ashe naa ninye eimalye eng-aīni ajo Paashe.

Meidim il-Maasae áiyama 'ñgorōyok e-'ng-aji enye ten etoni to-'l-osho ōbo, kake eidim áiyama 'ñgorōyok e-'n-gishōmi enye, neidim áiyama 'ñgorōyok e-'ng-ae-kishōmi.

After the bride's wedding-garments have been oiled, she puts them on, and is given a gourd which has been ornamented with cowries. This is put on her back, and she is taken by her husband, who is accompanied by two of his friends and two of the old women from his bride's kraal, to her future home. 585

She does not hurry but walks very slowly until she reaches her husband's kraal, where a child is given her to feed.

When a man marries, it is considered unlucky if he calls his wife by her name. He must give her another name. A favourite method is to call her by the age to which she belongs, thus, The (woman) of the Seure age. 551 593 777 [561]

If a Masai owns large herds of cattle he is able to marry many wives. Some have two wives, others three, and others four; whilst if rich men wish, they may have as many as ten or twenty. 595

When a Masai marries for the second or third time, his first wife gives the new wife a calf, after which they call one another Paashe, i. e. the giver and receiver of a calf. 595 431

No Masai may marry a woman belonging to the same sub-division as himself if both families live in the same district, but he may marry a woman of his own clan or one belonging to another clan. 582

3: Hollis G-5 (ca. 1894-1904) 1910 FL12 Masai FL12

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	Spoken of indirectly.	Addressed directly.	Remarks.
Husband's sister Husband's half-sister	*e-sindani*	*par-sindan* or *e-sindani ai.*	
Husband's brother's wife	*e-sindani*	*par-sindan* or *e-sindani ai.*	
Son's wife ...	*en-gerai*	*na-kerai.*	
Daughter's husband	*ol-aputani* (man); *eng-aputani* (woman).	*ol-aputani lai* (man); *eng-aputani ai* (woman).	
Brother's wife ...	*e-sindani e-anyil* (man); *e-sindani* (woman).	*par-sindan* or *e-sindani ai.*	
Half-brother's wife	*e-sindani*	*par-sindan* or *e-sindani ai.*	
Sister's husband ...	*ol-aputani* (man or boy); *e-sindani le-anyil* (girl or woman).	*ol-aputani lai*; *par-sindan* or *e-sindani lai.*	
Brother's son Half-brother's son	*ol-ayöni, en-gerai* ...	see son.	
Brother's daughter Half-brother's daughter	*en-dito, en-gerai* ...	see daughter.	
Sister's son ... Half-sister's son	*ol-ayöni, en-gerai* ...	see son.	
Sister's daughter Half-sister's daughter	*en-dito, en-gerai* ...	see daughter.	

When listening to Masai talking to one another it would often appear as if many of the terms of relationship used were the same as names of cattle, sheep, goats, and donkeys, etc. This is chiefly due to the fact that whenever a woman is brought into the family by marriage it is customary for her husband's relations and their wives to give her an animal to show that she is recognized as a member of the family. The giver and the recipient ever afterwards call one another after the animal which has been given, to which the particle *pa-* is prefixed.

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431
[585]

6: Thomson K-3 (1883-1884)1887
FL12 Masai FL12

885 becoming bald or developing grey hairs, but that he could not take the regulation dose of purgative as formerly. From this, coupled with the fact that he could not take such liberties with his stomach, he gathered that he was not quite so strong as formerly. We can imagine how he would curse his luck and look fiendish on discovering this unpalatable truth. There was nothing for it but to marry, and become a staid and respectable member of society. He had sown his wild oats.

583 Casting about, he fixed upon a damsel after his heart.
885 The preliminaries having been arranged—the number of bullocks to be paid, &c.—she was sealed to him. Then an
[304] operation was performed on the damsel. Recovered from its effects, she had to wait till the calving season, as abundance
[302] of milk is an indispensable requisite in the honeymoon. Meanwhile, she allowed her hair to grow till it assumed the
[301] appearance of an old shoe-brush clotted up with blacking. Round the head she wore a band of cowries from which
585 depended a number of strings, forming in fact the bridal
885 veil. At last the happy day arrived, and the final seal was put upon the marriage by both parties disposing of their chain earrings, and substituting a double disc of copper wire arranged spirally. The lady also shaved her head, laid aside the garment of the ditto, and clothed herself with two skins, one suspended from the waist the other from the shoulder. Strangest of all, however, and strikingly indicative of the fact that he had exchanged the spear for the distaff, Moran had actually to wear the garment of a ditto for one month. Just imagine what fun it would be in this staid and dignified country of ours, if a young man had to spend his honeymoon in a cast-off suit of his wife's maiden clothes. What our friend's feelings were in this guise, I do not know, and this veracious chronicle does not admit of conjecture.

837 And now Moran's sole idea was to rear a brood of young
885 cattle-lifters, and so that he got them, he was not very
[842] particular as to the manner of it. He was not jealous, asked no awkward questions, and employed no spies. If a friend should visit him, he was hospitable in a degree not consistent with a high level of morality. We shall here prudently follow his example of non-inquisitiveness; for we might find that the domestic affairs of our friend's household will not bear a too curious scrutiny.

885 He was now wholly a changed being—as indeed who is
262 not when he gets married! His strict rules of diet were

11: Leakey E-5 (no date) 1930 FL12 Masai FL12
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Before dealing with the subsequent procedure, after a girl has promised to visit a warrior on a given night, it is necessary to outline the sleeping arrangements and accommodation in a *manyatta* hut. The hut is not divided off into rooms in any way, and at one end of the hut is the bed upon which the woman (mother of one of the warriors) to whom the hut belongs, sleeps with her younger children. At the other end of the hut, not screened off in any way, is the bed upon which the warriors and girls sleep. No warrior may ever sleep upon the married woman's bed, but the woman's husband can come down and visit her whenever he likes, and when he does so, no warriors or girls may sleep in the hut. Ordinarily, however, the woman's husband does not live at the *manyatta*, and she and her small children sleep on her bed at the one end of the hut, while the warriors sleep on the bed at the other end of the hut with the girls. No warrior ever sleeps in his own mother's hut, but always in one of the other huts if he has invited a girl to sleep the night with him. When, therefore, he has arranged for a girl to visit him at night he goes in the evening to one of the other huts and arranges to sleep on the young people's bed there. He then sends a message by the woman who owns the hut to tell the girl that he is sleeping there so that she may come to him. There is absolutely no objection to several men coming in this way to the same hut, and sleeping on the same big bed each accompanied by his girl. In fact, it is considered wrong for a warrior and a girl to have sexual intercourse unless there are also other couples sleeping on the same bed. Moreover, besides those men who have come to the hut and sent for their girls to join them there, there are usually several younger girls, daughters of the woman who owns the hut, sleeping on the bed too. These young girls, too young as yet to sleep with the men sexually, nevertheless, sleep on the same bed as the warriors and older girls, and thus grow up steeped in the customs of the *manyatta*.

It is exceptionally difficult for a European to understand all the full details and facts concerning native sex life, but the following facts have been noted and verified for the Masai. No girl may sleep with a man except she be absolutely nude, but on the other hand, although by tradition and by etiquette she may not refuse an invitation to sleep with a man (except for the two reasons already given above), she is not necessarily expected to allow him full sexual intercourse, and, in fact, often does not do so. Thus—strange as it may seem—Masai girls do sometimes go to their husbands as virgins in the physical sense of the word (*see* Marriage), although they may have slept with men in the *manyattas* countless times. Usually, however, Masai girls have no objection to full intercourse except during the first four or five days after each menstrual period (*see* Girlhood), for the Masai firmly believe that conception cannot occur unless intercourse takes place very soon after menstruation, and four to five days is considered an absolutely safe margin. Moreover, this belief seems to have a strong foundation in fact, and it thus raises a very interesting point for physiologists as to whether this is as true of primitive peoples as it

11: Leakey E-5 (no date) 1930 FL12 Masai FL12
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from having the honour of the feast of her initiation." Should the man decide to marry the girl, this heifer is counted as one of those which must be handed over for the marriage transaction (*see* Marriage).

Girls' Initiation.—Among the Masai girls are initiated singly and not in groups, nor are they initiated until a good many years after puberty, for as soon as a girl is initiated she must be married, and cease to have any intercourse with the warriors or boys. Except under the circumstances described above, a girl is not initiated until her breasts begin to droop to a marked extent. As soon as this is noticeable, her mother informs the father, who makes the necessary arrangements. If the girl's mother is living at the time at a *manyatta* with one of her sons, then the girl's initiation will take place at the *manyatta*, otherwise it will take place at the home village. The essential point is that initiation must take place in the mother's hut (or in the hut of another of her father's wives, should her own mother be dead). The father comes to the place when the day of the ceremony has been fixed and beer is prepared. A ram called *olekelnjatha* is slaughtered either before the actual operation or just after it. This is the "ram for childbearing," and is supposed to insure fertility. This ram is eaten by all those present at the ceremony. The actual operation is performed by an old woman, who is a skilled operator (she may be either a Masai or a Dorobo), and the girl sits on a skin inside the hut during the operation. The operation is said to be the same as that used by the Kikuyu on their girls, and this is a form of clitoridectomy, but exact details cannot be obtained from the men. As soon as the operation is over the operator washes the girl to "cleanse her of the blood spilt" and a ram is then slaughtered and given to the operator. This ram is called *oletuguet*. Next a ram is killed called *olkelelartat* to provide meat and fat for the girl during convalescence.

Shaving Ceremony.—Finally after the girl is healed and before she can go to her husband's village, a ram is killed called *olbarnet*, which is the "ram for the shaving," and at the same time the girl's head is shaved by her mother.

PART V.—MARRIAGE.

Exogamy.—Marriage is always exogamous as far as sub-clans are concerned, but marriage within the main clan is allowed. This rule not only applies to marriage but to all forms of sexual intercourse. No one, whether as a boy, warrior, or a married may, may at any time ever have sexual intercourse with any woman, girl or child of his own sub-clan. This is the strictest rule of all Masai sex regulations, and the penalty for any breach of this rule is very severe indeed (*see* below).

A woman remains a member of her own sub-clan even after marriage, but her children belong to the sub-clan of her husband.

Betrothal.—Amongst the Masai there are two usual methods of betrothal:—

(1) Betrothal of unborn children.

(2) Betrothal of infant girls.

584 The method of betrothing an unborn child is as follows :—A man or boy wishing to do so seeks a pregnant woman (provided, of course, that her husband is not of his own sub-clan), and goes to her and anoints her on the stomach either with fat or with red ochre mixed with castor oil. By so doing he pledges that if the child born is a girl he will eventually marry her. Should the child be a boy he is bound to it in friendship for life. In the event of the child being a girl he must, from birth onwards, present the child with small gifts from time to time, and as the girl grows up supply her with such necklaces or ornaments as she may demand from him. A man or boy wishing to betroth himself to an infant girl does so simply by giving the child a necklace, and from then on he must supply her with such ornaments as she may require. Of course, a man must first of all ascertain that the child —whether unborn or an infant—is not already betrothed. A man may cancel a betrothal if he wishes to do so (but he cannot break his pledge of friendship with a boy in the case of a boy being born to a woman whom he anointed when she was pregnant), and the father of a girl may cancel betrothal by refusing to drink any more of the suitor's beer. If a girl, as she grows up, decides that she does not wish to marry the man to whom she is betrothed, she can easily avoid doing so by arranging with one of her lovers to have intercourse with her just after menstruation, and thereby conceiving. She then has the option of marrying this lover should he be willing.

584 884 *Normal Marriage (as a First Wife).*—It is clear from the above description of betrothal that it is unlikely that a girl will reach her time for initiation unbetrothed. Should she do so by any chance, her father would at once make every effort to find her a husband, probably from among the older men who already have several wives. Nor would the girl object in any way, for to be initiated and not be married directly afterwards would make her the laughing stock of all the neighbourhood. When a 585 girl is to be the first wife of a man, it usually means that her husband-to-be is still a member of a warrior group. This, of course, means that he cannot in the normal way live with his wife for some time. This fact, however, in no way interferes with the marriage ceremony and transaction, the presence of the husband not being considered in any way necessary.

[591] The respective fathers of the girl and of the man make all the arrangements and transactions when the girl is initiated (*see* below), and as soon as these have been concluded, and the girl has recovered from the operation and been through the shaving ceremony, she goes to the village of her husband's family, where she has already built herself a hut (or had it built for her by her friends).

As a married woman her main duty in life now is to bear children, just as it was her duty before initiation to avoid conception. If her husband is still in the warrior class and may, therefore, not have any sexual intercourse with her, this is no hindrance [839] to her in performing this duty, as she may now have intercourse with any married men of sub-clans other than her own.

11: Leakey E-5 (no date) 1930 FL12 Masai FL12
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Moreover, there will be no lack of married men willing to be the physical father of her children, since no married men may have intercourse with uninitiated girls, nor yet with their own wife or wives if with child. 585 830 843

Married women make a point of having intercourse immediately after menstruation in order to "get a child." All children born to a woman who is married are considered to be the children of her husband, no matter who their actual father may be. Owing to this system it may happen that by the time a man leaves the warrior stage and passes into the Elders' stage, and goes to live with his wife, he may find that she already has one or more children. 585 842 [561]

Normal Marriage (of a subsequent Wife).—In the case of a girl marrying a man who already has one or more wives, she simply goes to his village—where she has either already built a hut or had it built for her—as soon as the shaving ceremony is over after her initiation. She then lives with him in the normal way and he will probably be the physical father of her children, although not necessarily so, as she is permitted to have lovers if she wishes it, provided they are married men. 595 [837]

Forced Marriage.—It occasionally happens that the father of a man who is still in the warrior class decides for some reason or another that he wishes to have his son at home—wishes, in fact, that his son should leave the warrior stage before the age-group to which he belongs is due to move up to the Elders' stage en masse. In such a case he waits until the girl to whom his son is betrothed has been initiated and is ready for marriage (or even arranges for her initiation to be hastened) and then proceeds as follows. The marriage transaction having been completed and the girl's new hut built in the village, he sends for the girl and secludes her in the hut. He then arranges with some of the young men of the same age-group as his son to bring the youth to the village on some pretext or other. The usual pretext is that of going to the village to ask for a bullock for a meat feast (*see* Part IX). As soon as the village is reached these young men together with some older men seize the man and carry him forcibly to the girl's hut. The girl is alone in the hut; not even her mother may be present when the man is brought in. The two—man and girl—are forcibly held together so that their bodies touch. Once his body has touched hers (an initiated girl) in the presence of witnesses he cannot go back to the warrior group, and so has to remain and reconcile himself to premature married life with its restrictions. 585 561

Marriage of a Virgin.—There is a very curious custom connected with the marriage of a girl who is a virgin in the physical sense of the word, *i.e.* of a girl whose hymen has never been penetrated. Should a girl's husband find that his wife has come to him in this condition, he must send her back to her father's village the next morning carrying on her back a milk gourd without its stopper. This is a sign to her father that she went to her husband as a virgin, and her father must send her back to her husband with a gift in the form of a heifer as compensation to the husband. The husband may not himself perforate the hymen until this heifer has been received. 585

585 837 ***Married Sex Life.***—Among the Masai (as already stated) a married woman's first duty to her husband is to bear him children, and husbands do not mind if their wives have intercourse with other men, provided that they do not do so actually at a time when their husbands want them themselves. Even in such a case—apart from private measures which a husband might take—there is no recognised punishment for the woman, or any legal claim against the man, provided, of course, he is a married man of a sub-clan other than the woman's own. [684]

834 ***Sex Restrictions.***—There are, of course, certain definite regulations which must be observed, the chief of which are :—

(1) No woman may have intercourse while she is with child (not even with her husband).
(2) No woman may have intercourse during the actual period of menstruation.
(3) No married woman may have intercourse with an uninitiated boy.
(4) No man in the warrior class may have intercourse with a married woman.
(5) No married man may have intercourse with an uninitiated girl.
(6) No woman may have intercourse with a man who is the son of any member of her husband's own age-group ("They are as his own sons, whatever their clan may be").
(7) As already mentioned, the rule of sub-clan exogamy applies as much to general sex life as it does to marriage and, therefore, a woman must avoid all men of her own sub-clan.

684 PENALTIES FOR BREACHES OF THE ABOVE RESTRICTIONS.

Breach of No. 1.—There is no fixed punishment for a breach of this regulation, but the man would be accused of causing damage to the child, and should abortion take place later, or the child be born with any deformity, he would be held responsible.

Breach of No. 2.—There is no punishment for a breach of this regulation, but it is simply "Not done."

Breach of No. 3.—A woman who is found infringing this rule is severely punished in the following way. She is tied up and severely beaten by her husband, so that her whole skin is bruised, and then sheeps' urine is poured over the abrasions. This acid causes very severe pain for many hours. The boy is not punished, as the fault is held to be entirely that of the woman, who should know better. In actual practice the boy is expected to bring the husband a present of honey beer in order to placate him, and so avoid being cursed with a very potent curse. [431] [754]

Breach of No. 4.—There is no punishment for the woman who is found to have broken this rule, nor is there actual punishment for the man, save that if his sin is discovered he is dishonoured at once by his fellow age-group members, and even if not found out at once, his dishonourable conduct will be found out at the *Eunoto* ceremony (*see* p. 194), when his turn comes to enter the *thingira*.

12: Fox G-5 (1925-1930) 1930 FL12 Masai FL12
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Marriage.—The warriors may not marry till after the *E-Unoto*, and do not usually do so till after their first *Ol-Ng'esher*. The case stated by Mr. Leakey,[1] in which a warrior cannot have sexual intercourse with his initiated wife, is therefore hypothetical, and does not occur in practice.

The cattle required for the bride-price are payable on the birth of the first child, and cannot be reclaimed if the wife dies or runs away, because the husband has got the child. Wives live with their husbands, but they are common to their husband's generation, not his own exclusively. Thus if a stranger comes to a village where lives a man of his generation he may choose in which hut belonging to his generation he will sleep. When it is time to sleep it is the custom for the owner of the hut to vacate it and leave the stranger with his wife. It is quite lawful and proper for the stranger to have sexual intercourse with the woman provided that she consents and that the restrictions (*see* p. 202) are observed. It is said that if a woman is persistently unwilling to allow the members of her husband's generation to have intercourse with her she may be severely admonished, and her husband may be fined a number of cattle.

On the other hand, the members of one generation are extremely jealous of generations older or younger than themselves. A fight between generations is very likely to occur if the men of one generation find that a man of another has had intercourse with one of their women.

If a woman who has borne children leaves her husband and lives apart from him, he waits till his eldest son is old enough, and then sends him to fetch her back.

A man may not have sexual intercourse with the wife of his full brother (mother's son), but may have it with the wife of a half-brother (same father, different mother) who is of his generation. He may not have intercourse with his wife's sister or half-sister.

A husband and wife may not call each other by their names.

Father-in-law
Mother-in-law
Son-in-law
Daughter-in-law
} Must not be addressed by name.

Family.—The name for a family is *Ol Marei*. Relationship is not recognized beyond first cousin. The Masai take little interest in their genealogies and can seldom trace their ancestry beyond the fourth generation. Nevertheless, if a man is of pure Masai descent, *Ol Masainí ainoti*, he is proud of the fact.

Death and Burial.—Dead bodies are disposed of by the hyænas, except for those of *Laibons* or very influential old men. These are buried under cairns of stones.

[1] *See* p. 200 of this volume.

13:Huntingford E-4 (no date) 1953 FL12 Masai FL12

Betrothal

584 A man usually chooses his wife himself and, after obtaining the girl's consent, asks his father to approach her parents; if they agree the girl's head is smeared with fat, and she may no longer live in the same kraal as her betrothed. According to Hollis, a man makes the first approach to the girl's father himself, giving him first tobacco, and later on when the girl is older, more tobacco and honey. It is considered wrong for a girl to become pregnant during the betrothal period, and the engagement may be broken off, a custom of which advantage is taken by girls who are betrothed to a man they do not wish to marry, since betrothals are sometimes arranged without the girl's consent. Fathers, for instance, sometimes arrange betrothals between their young sons and daughters in order to strengthen the bonds of friendship between them (as also among the Nandi); and betrothals may take place between warriors and babies, and even unborn girls.

Regulation of Marriage

582 614 This depends on three things: clan, age-set, and kinship. (*a*) According to Hollis, marriage between clans is allowed, but sub-clans are exogamous groups (see below, p. 118); a man may marry a woman of another sub-clan of his own clan. Merker says he may not marry a woman of his mother's sub-clan. Tombo ole Mbasi, however, says that though intermarriage between clans is allowed, each clan is an exogamous group; Fosbrooke agrees that the clan is the exogamous group (see p. 120). (*b*) A man may not marry a woman who is by custom considered as belonging to the age-set (*ol-porror*) senior to his own, to his own age-set, or (if he belongs to the Right-hand Circumcision) to a woman of the Left-hand Circumcision. But he may marry one of the same generation[**] (*ol-oji*). See below, p. 117, for details of the age-set system. (*c*) A man may not marry a woman whose relationship to him is closer than that of third cousin, and then only if they call each other *o-le-sotua* and *en-e-sotua*.

Bridewealth

583 Payment of bride-cattle establishes the husband's rights in his wife's procreative faculties and over the children she bears him. The numbers of stock paid seem to vary slightly. Merker gives them as three cows and one ox to the girl's father (the ox being eaten at the marriage feast), and a ewe and ram to her mother (the ram also being eaten). Hollis says the bride's father is given three heifers and two oxen, one of which is slaughtered " at the door of the hut "; on account of the other ox the man and his father-in-law call each other *pa-kiny*, " giver and receiver of an ox." To the bride's mother are given two rams, which are slaughtered, and a ewe, on account of which he and his mother-in-law call each other *pa-kor* (sheep). Fosbrooke gives the number as two oxen and three cows or heifers, including the " *pa-kiny* " ox.

Marriage

585 There appears to be little ceremonial at a wedding. The chief occurrence is a feast at the bride's home, of which the bride and bridegroom do not partake. This is followed by a ceremonial journey of the bride to her husband's home; she wears a freshly oiled garment, carries a gourd ornamented with cowries, and is accompanied by two men and two old women; on her arrival, she is given a child to feed. Thomson says that on the day of marriage and for a month afterwards (if I understand him aright) the husband wears female dress.[**] If the husband is still a warrior he may not have sexual intercourse with his wife, though they may live together at

[**] Merker, p. 47.

[**] Discrepancies between authorities may sometimes be due to difference of tribe, and not always to incorrect information or mere misunderstanding.

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his father's home or in his own *manyata*. But it seems that a ceremony is performed which releases the husband from the prohibition on warriors having sexual relations with married women. 585

A widow is looked after by her husband's brother, or by one of her own brothers; she may cohabit with her husband's brother. It appears that a woman who has had children may not marry again, though one who is childless may marry her husband's half-brother, if he has one. Any children she may have after her husband's death are counted as his. 587 837 948

Polygyny

A man may have as many wives as he can pay for: one of Hollis's texts says that a rich man may have as many as 20. Actual figures show that while two wives are common, three and over are found much less often, and more than five very seldom. Each wife has her own hut in the husband's kraal, *enk-ag*, the first wife on the right of the gate as you go in, the second on the left. To each wife are allocated cattle which she holds in trust for her children. 595

Adultery

Adultery is not common, because the rules controlling sexual relations are wide and elastic. Any of a man's age-mates (members of his own *ol-ayi*) may have access to his wife, and though men of one age-set are not supposed to associate with the wives of another age-set, in practice this rule is little observed. A warrior is not supposed to have intercourse with a married woman, and a married woman may not have sexual relations with an uncircumcised boy. 837 684

Divorce

A wife cannot be divorced once she has borne a child, though a temporary separation may occur, the wife, if the husband is at fault, going to one of his age-mates, or, if she is at fault, to her father. 586

Adoption

In the old days, children captured in war were often adopted; and even today, children of "foreigners" (those who are not Masai) may be adopted, especially in times of famine. Such children become accepted as Masai. Under the term "adoption" is also included the practice of adopting children within the family, e.g., a father will adopt a child of his wife's which has been begotten by another man, and a barren wife may adopt a child of one of her co-wives. 597

Birth and Naming

Birth takes place in the mother's hut, where she is attended by a midwife, *enk-ainyioni*. The women and girls of the kraal assemble, and after the child has been born they feast on an ox supplied by the father; next day another ox is killed for the rest of the people of the kraal. The mother remains in her hut till she feels strong enough to go out; the husband may not enter the hut for 10 days, nor eat in it till the child can walk. Intercourse between husband and wife stops as soon as the wife knows she is pregnant, and is not resumed till the child is weaned, when it is between one and two years old. (Hollis says till the time when it cuts the two middle incisor teeth, upper and lower.) Twins are considered very desirable, and a boy is preferred to a girl. 844 846 843 833 845

The first name is given either on the fourth day after birth, when the child is taken outside to be shown the sun, or at a feast held on the 10th day, which begins with the killing and cooking of an ox: the meat is distributed to the inhabitants of the kraal, and in the evening the mother, carrying the child on her back, milks the cows. After this, the child is named in the presence of the father and mother 553 852

/44 cont./

582 for the contemplative idleness of the married man. But before the
583 marriage takes place the bride price is to be paid first.

As bride price (en dogitin = the things, each part of them, en dogi = the thing) he first pays the bride's father five pots of honey from which beer will be brewed, furthermore three cows and an ox. The bride's mother receives a male and a female sheep. The ox and the male sheep will be eaten at the feast taking place on the [601] wedding day. Around that day, more often afterwards than before, [551] the /45/ bridegroom further brings the father-in-law a cow and the mother-in-law a female sheep that has not yet had young, whereupon the former call each other ba-geteń (1),

1. Cf. Second Part, III, terms of address for relatives.

while the bridegroom and the mother-in-law call each other ba-ger
• 585 from now on. Every wife married later receives at the wedding
[595] from the principal wife of her husband a year-old heifer, whereupon
[431] the two call each other b'-asche, from the eldest child of her hus-
[551] band two goats or sheep, hence the address ba-ndare, and from the
[601] smaller children of four to six years old and upward a goat or a sheep each, through which the address ba-gine, ba-suben, or ba-
583 lelo is brought about. During the period immediately after the wedding, the mother-in-law receives from the son-in-law several more pots of honey, skins for clothing, and iron wire for making
[791] leg and arm ornaments. In the family of Chief Zendeo he receives, as he told me, only a cow as bride price for one of his daughters, while the mother of the girl gets two donkeys, a bull and a cow with calf. Since the last rinderpest it has happened not infrequently that a man is not in a position to pay the customary bride price. He then gives the father-in-law only one cow and leads her to him on a rope twisted out of grass. Whereas the bridegroom or young married man delivers the gifts of livestock himself, he always sends the honey by a woman. She is either a wife married previously, his mother, his older sister, or a wife of his brother. Only when the distance is very great does he deliver the honey himself,

582 /47 cont./
[614] by him one or more times, returned to him again. Although such a
[178] legally perfectly valid marriage takes place, the bridegroom in this
[583] case often pays no bride price. Moreover, the bride is not supposed
[613] to be from the lineage of the bridegroom's mother, nor should her
[561] mother belong to the lineage of the bridegroom, or her father to his age class (1)

1. Cf. Chapter IX of this part.

(ol boror) or to his age-class association (ol adji). The bride may not be from an older age class or the same one, or a much younger one than the bridegroom.

Younger brothers are not supposed to marry before the older brother, younger sisters not before the older sister, but as a rule they can buy permission for the marriage from them by paying one or a few head of cattle, in the place of which now, when the Masai are poor in livestock, a couple of pots of honey often appear. A marriage between foster brother and sister is not permitted; this is regarded as
[613] incest. Moreover, the man may not marry two women from the same lineage; it is precisely in membership in the same lineage that consanguinity is seen, and wives of a man may not be consanguineously related.

[564] Moreover, a marriage between relatives of blacksmiths and those
[326] of nonblacksmiths is not permitted.

[587] Widows (eñ goliai, ñ golia) or divorced women who have living sons may not marry again, but live with men who belong to the age class of their deceased husband, if there is no other obstacle to
[565] marriage between them. Difference in standing is in practice an obstacle to marriage insofar as the poor man does not have enough livestock to pay the bride price for the daughter of a wealthy man.
[595] The man may not enter into a further marriage until at least two months have elapsed since his last wedding.

• 585 The wedding feast, allegedly in accordance with an ancient custom, is popularly set for the third day of the month. The wedding company consists of the relatives and friends of the bridal couple and the inhabitants of the kraal in which the bride's parents live.

/47 cont./

• 585 People gather in the vicinity of this kraal in the cool morning hours under a large shade tree, to which each of the participants brings something edible and potable, a sheep, a goat, a pot of honey, a calabash of milk or honey beer. The children belonging to the family of the bride and to her relatives drive up a head of cattle belonging to the bride's father. The head of cattle is immediately slaughtered to feed the guests. Bride and groom are festively adorned, that is, [302] above all /48/ rubbed on the upper body and head with a paint made out of beef suet and red ocher. Those present sit in a large circle, one half of which is formed by the bridegroom with the men and the other by the bride with the women and children, so that the bride and groom are opposite each other. Whereas the guests partake [753] heartily of the foods, the bridal couple may not take anything because they would become sick from it, would get a rash around their mouths, but rather they must bear patiently a flood of good teachings and advice. After finishing the banquet and the dance following it, which does not come to an end until shortly before midnight, everyone retires; the bride goes with her mother into the latter's hut, the bridegroom together with other warriors into another one. On the following day people again assemble for dancing. On this day only two sheep are slaughtered; the bridegroom brings one, his father-in-law gives the other. Women and girls rub their bodies and skin aprons with the fat of the animals. After the meal the bride is handed over to the bridegroom and the two move into their new hut, to which the man's mother brings a small child from the neighborhood. The man takes the child from her and puts it on the lap of his wife, who gives the [842] child milk to drink out of a gourd bottle. This ceremony is supposed not only to express the wish for numerous progeny, but it is also believed that it has the magic power to bring them forth.

In some regions it is customary for married people to remain together immediately after the wedding, and the wife may not leave the hut either on the wedding day or for the following five days. In others the wife goes for a time, 20 days to two months, to her mother or mother-in-law, or, if her husband already has several wives, to his principal wife, in order to be instructed in the work of the household and, with the help of her hostess, to build a hut of

/48 cont./

585 her own. Where a jus primae noctis is customary -- frequent, but not general -- it belongs to one or two old comrades-in-arms of the young husband. One who does not grant the jus primae noctis when it is claimed is insultingly called ol alomŏni or ol ŏmischo (formed from a-lōm, that is, refuse). He refuses others what they have a right to and must expect them to steal a few head of cattle from him in the next few days without his being entitled to raise a complaint about it. One who does not want to go along with this old custom, which is said to happen, has the wedding take place without any festivity, in order to avoid it. The bridegroom simply hands over the bride price, whereupon the bride, without any ceremony, follows
[591] him into his already completed hut. This dwelling lies either in the kraal of his father or in the warrior kraal occupied by the young husband up to then and remains there until all his age mates are married; only then do the married couple build their own kraal.

/49/ After the married couple have moved into their home, the wife may not leave it for the next two days. It is customary for the husband to present her with three cows and a bull during these days, and on the third day she accompanies this livestock to the pasture, but does not stay there. During the next three days the wife does no work; not until the fourth day does she start it, and to be sure, with the milk-
[822] ing of a plain black cow. According to the Masai explanation, the plain black is the symbol for quiet seriousness, whereas bright colors signify gaiety and lightheartedness. The woman is supposed to perform her duties with seriousness and not neglect them, lightheartedly rambling about, and make her husband angry by idle gossip.

768 If the marriage is dissolved by the husband's death, the widow
587 may, if she is willing, become the property of his eldest brother or half brother; she may live with the former, whereas the latter may marry her legally after the expiration of three or four months. Upon
586 the death of the wife, the husband pays no compensation. A divorce may be brought about if the man drives out the woman or if the woman runs away from the man and refuses to return. In the first instance, the divorce is preceded by a family consultation in which the head of the family pronounces the divorce. The woman must